WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Import of Indian brands of vanaspati manufactured in Sri Lanka

1642. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that certain Indian brands of vanaspati oil are being manufactured in Sri Lanka and imported in India at a cheaper rate, for marketing in India.

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken to protect the interests of Vanaspati oil manufacturers in India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) to (c) There are no restrictions of Indian brands of vanaspati oil being manufactured abroad. Under India-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement (ISLFTA), some of the steps taken to protect the interests of domestic vanaspati/edible oil industry, *inter-alia,* include: the fixing of a Tariff Rate Quota (TRQ) of 2.5 lakh MT on import of vanaspati, bakery shortening and margarine from Sri Lanka to India since November, 2006 under ISLFTA; allowing import of oilseeds/edible oils except copra/coconut oil on OGL; concessional rate of import duty on certain vegetable oils for manufacture of refined oil/ vanaspati; low import duty on certain crude vegetable oils compared to refined oils to facilitate raw materials availability; increase in import duty on vanaspati, bakery shortening, margarine from 30% to 80%; canalization of duty free import of vanaspati from Nepal through STC; reduction in import duty on crude palm oil and refined palm oil; exemption of Special Additional Duty of customs on import of crude and refined edible grade vegetable oils etc.

Funds for research in Tea and Honey

1643. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the research work for development of tea and honey is facing financial crisis in Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by Government to provide sufficient funds to carry forward the work in these backward States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) This Ministry has not received any request for financial assistance from these two States for Honey. As regards tea, substantial funds have been allocated by the Government to the Tea Board for Research and Development work in tea growing areas including Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh. During 10th Plan period, the outlay was Rs. 70 crores. The outlay on R&D will be continued during the 11th Plan.

Applications from States for SEZs

1644. SHRI PRAVEEN RASHTRAPAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the State-wise details of applications for SEZs received, approvals granted, size, etc.;

(b) whether it is a fact that Government had appointed MPs committee to look into grievances of the farmers; and

(c) if so, the details of the said committee?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) The details of proposals received and approvals granted under the provisions of the Special Economic Zones Act, 2005 are given in the Statement (*See* below).

(b) and (c) Government has not appointed any such Committee.